



# Parks & People: South Africa

International Experience in South Africa

Parks and People (South Africa) is a spring semester abroad program that brings together the natural and social sciences in projects that address issues of community and human development, biodiversity, environmental protection, sustainability, and water, food and energy security

Study Abroad in South Africa is practical and affordable:

- The cost is comparable to a semester at the University Park campus
- Penn State faculty oversee program at all times
- Credits count toward any one of three Penn State minors
- Open to all majors and any semester standing

The program is a 15-credit suite of courses that focus on:

- understanding physical processes in various South African ecosystems (GEOG 498A)
- experiencing different community livelihood strategies (GEOG 498B)
- relating historical events to current social and physical landscapes (GEOG 498C)
- researching the challenges related to human-environment interactions (GEOG 498D)
- reflecting on, and debating, the varied perspectives on defining and solving socio-ecological issues (GEOG 498E)



Admission is competitive. We consider academic achievement, but we also need students who work well in teams and are willing to take on leadership roles in those teams—much of the program is project based and there is a heavy emphasis on multidisciplinary team work. The program is challenging and unlike anything you have done before.

**Participants must be good ambassadors for the U.S. and Penn State.**

Interested: Contact Lisa Skripek, 221 Walker Bldg, [lms4@psu.edu](mailto:lms4@psu.edu), 814 863 7598



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## Course Descriptions for Parks and People (South Africa) Spring 2013

GEOG 498A (3 credits) will introduce students to South Africa's physical landscape by focusing on the various biomes found within South Africa. Students will learn about, experience and discuss the climate, soil, vegetation, biodiversity, primary human impacts associated with each biome and the environmental services that are provided by these systems.

GEOG 498B (3 credits) will focus on the livelihoods associated with various communities within South Africa with a focus on Afrikaans, Xhosa and English communities. The course will also address challenges of urban and rural communities and the availability, accessibility and utilization of natural resources by these communities. In addition, the course will look at the implications of development initiatives on local livelihoods and opportunities for sustainable development to reduce pressures on the natural environment.

GEOG 498C (3 credits) will focus on the impacts of South Africa's social and political history on the current social and physical landscape. The course will also assess crucial pieces of literature written by South Africans about South Africa, and how various writers, artists and movie directors have portrayed South Africa throughout its history. This course will challenge students to articulate social, ecological, political and economic challenges in a variety of written formats intended for multiple audiences.

GEOG 498D (4 credits) is a project based course and students will be provided with tools necessary for conducting ecological and social assessment plans as well as developing research proposals that address challenges related to human-environment interactions.

GEOG 498E (2 credits) will be a discussion based course which will address topics such as global citizenship, service learning, leadership among others. The course will also focus on developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills within the group with the aid of a Penn State student affairs representative. Students will be required to do written, picture and video journals to aid in reflection and communication of complex themes.



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## Approximate Cost of Participation<sup>1</sup>

Parks and People		University Park Campus	
Tuition (in-state)	\$ 7,562 - 8,176	Tuition (in state)	\$ 7,562 - 8,661
University Fees	620	Fees	430
Program Fee	3,250	Room and Board <sup>2</sup>	4,710 <sup>3</sup>
Airline Ticket <sup>4</sup>	2,200	Text Books	200 - 600
Personal Expenses	300 - 600 <sup>5</sup>	Personal Expenses	800 - 1,000
Immunizations	400		
Internet Research <sup>6</sup>	100		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,432 - \$15,346</b>		<b>\$13,702 - \$14,401</b>

Several scholarships are available for this program through the University Office of Global Programs, contact the Education Abroad Advisor: Kathleen Fox (kaf29@IP.psu.edu)

The program carries 15 credits at the 400 level. The content of the classes are distributed across the Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities. Juniors and Seniors are usually able to count them as technical or free electives, depending on their major. With the permission of your Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, it may also be possible to count some of these credits toward General Education in the appropriate categories. While we cannot guarantee this for all cases, most previous participants have managed to count a sufficient number of these credits into their program, such that participation in Parks and People has not added any additional time to graduation.

<sup>1</sup> This table is based on spring 2012 figures but does show the approximate cost of staying on campus versus participating in Parks & People (South Africa)

<sup>2</sup> Assuming you are living in the dorms and using a University meal plan for all meals.

<sup>3</sup> Standard double room with the level 6 meal plan

<sup>4</sup> Price may vary, but this is the approximate price

<sup>5</sup> All accommodation, meals and in-country travel expenses are covered. Personal expenses, such as snacks, soda, souvenirs and presents are extra

<sup>6</sup> This covers internet access for research purposes. Internet access for personal reasons would be an additional cost.